

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, for the last 5 years I have been working with a bipartisan group of my colleagues to make it illegal to continue the barbaric practice of game bird and illegal dog fighting.

Unfortunately, these practices continue because the purveyors of them have settled on the tactic of having minimal sanctions, not having meaningful penalties in our statutes. Unfortunately, this takes on new urgency because it is not just the fighting and the violence and the illegal betting and other criminal activities. We are now finding, for instance, that viruses like bird flu can be spread through this vile trade.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the House Republican leadership to stand up to the dark, shadowy forces that allow these evil practices to continue. Allow the bill that has been cosponsored, bipartisan, 324 cosponsors, to be voted on, on a suspension calendar. In fact, it won't even take the 40 minutes we normally allocate, because I am quite confident that we don't find any of the apologists for this barbaric trade who would be willing to stand up in public to defend what they protect in the back rooms of Congress.

HEALTH INSURANCE FOR LIFE ACT (H.R. 5740)

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge the passage of legislation that I am cosponsoring with the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE).

The Health Insurance for Life Act provides extended health care coverage to individuals and families who need COBRA when they are in between jobs or waiting for their health insurance to begin at a new job.

Suburban families like those living in the Hudson Valley in New York encounter a job change an average of seven times. Workers need assurances that their health insurance remains as transferable and uncomplicated as possible when job changes occur.

COBRA provides the safety net that parents and children need to maintain affordable health insurance, but under current law there are time limitations on how long families can use COBRA. H.R. 5740 removes COBRA's time limits and ensures that families in need of extended COBRA coverage cannot be charged unreasonable premiums.

This Congress must continue developing new ways to protect the underinsured and uninsured in New York and throughout our country. Passage of our bill ensures that time is on the side of families and children who rely on COBRA for their health insurance.

PROPERLY PREPARING OUR MILITARY

(Mr. SNYDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SNYDER. Personnel in our military, Mr. Speaker, must be properly equipped and trained in order to be ready for the unforeseen wars of the future. Even General Schoomaker, the Chief of Staff of the Army, though readiness levels are classified, has publicly expressed concern regarding the unacceptable readiness levels of our U.S.-based units. Not enough equipment, not enough money, not enough time for proper training for our wonderful troops.

We can do better, Mr. Speaker. America must do better so we can be the safe, secure country we want to be.

PRESERVING THE CIA PROGRAM

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week we will consider legislation to authorize military tribunals for the prosecution of suspected terrorists and clarify Common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention.

Strenuous interrogation is vital in our efforts to win the global war on terrorism. The CIA program has produced intelligence that has saved countless lives. KSM, the mastermind of 9/11, was arrested as a result of information developed from the program.

The clarification of Common Article 3 will preserve the CIA interrogation program. As a JAG officer for 28 years, I support providing definitions. We do not want to leave our men and women vulnerable to prosecution under vague international law.

I commend Chairman DUNCAN HUNTER for reaching a good bargain with President Bush and the Senate. I look forward to voting in favor of the Military Commissions Act and advancing our efforts to win the global war on terrorism to protect American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

IT'S TIME THE DO-NOTHING CONGRESS ACTUALLY DO SOMETHING FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. CLEAVER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, when I landed here in Washington, I received a phone call almost immediately from my brother-in-law in St. Louis who said somewhat jokingly, "I sure hope you will do something for America this week." And all I could think about was, "I do, too." Because, unfortunately, we are not doing much for America.

We should not leave this town this week without passing legislation to implement the 9/11 Commission's recommendations so we can make our Nation safer. Congress shouldn't leave without raising the minimum wage for

6.6 million Americans who haven't seen a raise in 9 years. We shouldn't leave without rolling back the \$12 billion in tax breaks that were showered on big oil companies last year.

The history books are not going to be kind to this Congress. With a 25 percent approval rating, it seems to me that one way to raise it would be to do something.

NATIONAL SEAFOOD MONTH

(Mr. BROWN of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in 1990, Congress designated October as National Seafood Month. This month-long celebration highlights the importance of seafood as part of a healthy diet. National Seafood Month also honors and celebrates the many contributions of the seafood and fishing industries and recognizes the multiple ways in which industry professionals serve our Nation's economy and continues to spur economic growth.

The First Congressional District of South Carolina, which I represent, has over 75 percent of the South Carolina coastline. Many of my constituents are hardworking shrimpers and fishermen, and I appreciate all the hard work to supply us with good quality seafood.

As the popularity of seafood continues to grow, National Seafood Month offers a unique way to remind consumers of the way the industry helps meet the needs in providing healthy and delicious seafood products year round. Creating a greater awareness among consumers is essential in the efforts to spread the positive message that seafood is a delicious and nutritious source of protein in the American diet.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring House Resolution 479 which supports the goals and ideals of National Seafood Month.

IRAQ

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the President says he looks to the generals on how to prosecute the war in Iraq. Yesterday, two generals from the Army and a Marine colonel who had all served in Iraq called for the resignation of the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Rumsfeld.

The President has repeatedly claimed he listens to the military. Well, General John Batiste told an oversight hearing that Rumsfeld and others in the Bush White House "did not tell the American people the truth for fear of losing support for the war in Iraq."

The generals have spoken, Mr. President. Your Defense Secretary misled us into combat with disastrous consequences. Rumsfeld has failed our soldiers and the American people. He just

ordered another 4,000 into Iraq, into the cauldron of violence that his incompetence has created.

The generals have spoken, Mr. Speaker. Tell the President to listen to us. Will you? Somebody has got to talk to the President. He doesn't seem to listen to Members of Congress. The generals have now spoken. What is he waiting for? Perhaps it is the election.

DEMOCRATS OUT OF TOUCH

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to deliver a message: The Democrats have no direction when it comes to the war on terror and national security. Just this week, the minority leader said, and I quote, "5 years after 9/11 Osama bin Laden is still free, and not a single terrorist who planned 9/11 has been caught and brought to justice."

In reality, currently, the U.S. has in captivity Khalid Shaikh Mohammad, the mastermind behind 9/11; Mustafa Ahmad as-Hawsawi, a financier of the 9/11 attacks; and Ramzi-Bin al-Shibh, who served as a facilitator between the 9/11 hijackers in the U.S. and the al Qaeda leadership in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Another baffling statement was made recently by the Senate minority leader referring to the national security bills the House has passed to make our Nation safer and secure our porous borders. The Senate minority leader openly said that the Republican Congress is spending time on issues that are not relevant to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, the statements of the respected minority leaders lead me to believe that not only are the Democrats out of touch with the majority of Americans, but it appears as if they are now completely out of touch with reality.

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SPY AGENCIES SAY IRAQ WAR WORSENS TERRORISM THREAT

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, the headlines in the New York Times says it all, "Spy Agencies Say Iraq War Worsens Terrorism Threat."

The top secret terrorism document was completed in April, after receiving final approval from all 16 national intelligence departments. The report concludes that rather than being in retreat, Islamic radicalism has spread across the globe. According to an American intelligence official, the report says that the Iraq war has made the overall terrorism problem worse and attacks continue to increase, with 2,700 soldiers killed and 17,000 injured.

And yet, over the last month President Bush told the American people

that our Nations and its allies are safer than they ever were.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the President to be honest with the American public. He needs to tell the truth, and we need to make sure that those folks that are preparing to vote in November don't believe all of these lies and scare tactics being used by the Republican Party.

NATIONAL DEFENSE

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, when I decided to run for Congress, I made a conscious decision to do so, and I took my oath of office very seriously, just as every Member before me and every Member in the future will as well.

I knew that the first and foremost responsibility of the Federal Government was to provide for the national defense. It is actually in the preamble of our Constitution. America is a peace-loving Nation. And yet we find ourselves in a war with an enemy who hides in the shadows and preys on the innocent, terrorists who have murdered innocent citizens and are enemies of freedom and liberty and democracy.

Mr. Speaker, election day is coming to our Nation, and as Americans make their decisions, national security and the war on terror is on every voter's mind. So I ask them to consider what the Democratic minority leader said in a recent interview about the upcoming elections when asked about the importance of national security. She said, "This is what I guess campaigns will be about. It shouldn't be about national security."

Mr. Speaker, Americans are dying and the Democratic minority leader doesn't think national security should be an issue. Think about that.

AMERICA IS NOT SAFER TODAY

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, America is not safer today than it was before 9/11. The President can continue to deny this fact in speeches around the country, but his own intelligence agencies concluded that the world is not safer today, and the main reason is the ongoing war in Iraq.

This is not the only proof that we are less safe today than 5 years ago. A recent independent Council on Global Terrorism report assigned a grade of D-plus to our Nation's efforts in combating Islamic extremism. The council concluded that "there is every sign that radicalization in the Muslim world is spreading rather than shrinking."

Another report, this one by Foreign Policy Magazine, surveyed our Nation's

top security experts from across the political spectrum and their conclusions that 84 percent said we are losing the war on terrorism and 87 percent said the war in Iraq had a negative impact on the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that we get back to fighting the real war on terror. We need to begin redeploying our troops out of Iraq and refocusing our efforts in Afghanistan. How can we defeat the terrorists if we have seven times as many troops in Iraq as we do in Afghanistan?

NATIONAL SECURITY

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, as we remember 9/11, it should renew our determination to see justice brought to those responsible and to protect our homeland against further attack.

This week, we will take up legislation on both of those points. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our intelligence community, we have captured most of those responsible for murdering nearly 3,000 of our innocent civilians on 9/11.

This week, we will create a framework to bring these terrorists to justice. It will provide a system that is fair and firm and ensures that these terrorists are never again given the chance to do us harm.

We will also work to prevent further attacks on America by strengthening our surveillance capabilities on terrorist activities. In the war on terror, intelligence-gathering is crucial, and we must give our intelligence community the tools it needs to protect America.

Mr. Speaker, nothing is more urgent than strengthening our national security.

AMERICA'S ECONOMIC SITUATION

(Mr. CARNAHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, President Bush and congressional Republicans are out of touch with the economic conditions faced by millions of working Americans today. If they would only take time to talk with any working Americans, they would hear that most fear they are losing their piece of the American Dream. Most Americans are not asking for much. They want to keep their heads above water without going into debt so they can provide a better future for their children.

Unfortunately, most Americans believe the American Dream is getting harder to reach, and many fear their children will be worse off in the future. Working Americans are justifiably skeptical about today's economy. While overall productivity is up,